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An intensive cultural resources survey was conducted over approximately 5.8 acres. A records search and pedestrian survey failed to locate any prehistoric, historic, or architectural resources.

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A NEGATIVE IMPACT REPORT OF A CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY OF
MINGO DITCH SCOUR REPAIR, ST. FRANCIS BASIN MAINTENANCE,
STODDARD COUNTY, MISSOURI

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Memphis District

Jimmy D. McNeil
Archaeologist

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April 1984

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ABSTRACT

On 2 and 3 April 1984, an intensive cultural resources survey was conducted by the Environmental Analysis Branch of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District over approximately 5.8 acres. The project is located near Hobbs Chapel, Stoddard County, Missouri, Township 25N, Range 8E, NE 1/4, and of NE 1/4 of Section 8 and SE 1/4 of SE 1/4 of Section 5, of the Puxico Quadrangle. The proposed project includes repairing eroded areas upstream and downstream. A records search and a pedestrian survey failed to locate any prehistoric, historic, or architectural sites within the project right-of-way.

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General Survey Area

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Introduction

An intensive cultural resources survey was conducted by Memphis District archaeologists, Jimmy McNeil and Doug Prescott, on 2 and 3 April, within the proposed Mingo Ditch Scour Repair project right-of-way. The total project includes approximately 5.8 acres. The survey consisted of visual inspection of the exposed scour areas and the exposed ground surface. One cultural resource was located adjacent to the project right-of-way. The pedestrian survey and literature search of this area is in accordance with requirements outlined in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665) and recommended to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 91-190).

Study Area and Project Description

The project is located near Hobbs Chapel, Stoddard County, Missouri, Township 25N, Range 8, NE 1/4, NE 1/4 of Section 8 and SE 1/4 of SE 1/4 of Section 5 of the Puxico Quadrangle (Figure 1).

Floodwaters flowing through Mingo Ditch have eroded through the existing levee at two areas (Figure 2). At each area gully erosion has cut heavily into the adjacent field, causing large, deep holes. In some places the erosion has occurred to a depth of greater than 3 meters below the topsoil-subsoil contact. Vertical profiles show that very little topsoil covers the subsoil in many places.

The areas around and between the erosional features were plowed. Thus, ground visability was 100 percent.

The proposed maintenance action includes installing drainage culverts for the erosion features and rebuilding the damaged levee area. All equipment will be brought in over existing roads and across existing levees and berms. All work and equipment sloping will be conducted from/on the existing levee and berms. Fill and construction materials that are not brought in will be obtained from the existing levee. Project right-of-way will extend no further than the landward edge of the existing berm.

Environmental Setting

The project is located within the Mississippi Alluvial lowland of southeast Missouri which is the Mississippi Embayment of the Gulf Coast plain physiographic province (Steyermark 1963:xvi). The area is at the edge of an alluvial plain between Crowley's Ridge on the west and Sikeston Ridge to the east.

Today there are no large areas of woodlands remaining the area; however, there are scattered trees along roads and ditches. The trees are predominantly oak, elm, and sycamore.

Fauna present today includes raccoon, fox, gray squirrel, fox squirrel and opossum. A large population of reptiles, amphibians, fish and birds are also found in the area.

Previous Research

Until recently, very little archaeological work has been conducted in the general area of this survey, and no work has been conducted in the immediate project area. Recent work within Stoddard County has been conducted by Gilmore (1978), LeeDecker (1980), and Williams (1964).

Results of the Records Search

Mr. Michael Weichman, Chief Archaeologist of the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office, conducted a search of the state files to determine if sites had been recorded for Township 25N, Range 8E, Sections 5 and 8. By phone, Mr. Weichman informed me that sites were recorded for both Sections. However, the listed sites 23ST412, 455, 456 and 410 are not within the project right-of-way.

Survey Methodology and Results

The combined designated maintenance area right-of-way is approximately 5.8 acres in size. The entire area had been disturbed when the levee was originally built. The survey area consisted of a strip 30.48 meters wide and 548.64 meters long, on the right descending bank. The vertical profiles of both erosional features were carefully checked for cultural traces and indicators. None were found within the project right-of-way. The plowed, 30.48 meters wide strip between the two erosional areas was walked over and visually checked by both archaeologists. On the trip down and back, between

the erosional features, the archaeologists were only 4-5 meters apart. Thus, the areas were very closely checked for artifacts and other cultural indicators. Profiles within the project right-of-way showed mixed fill materials over orangish-brown subsoil. However, outside the right-of-way, 10-12 cm of topsoil overlaid the subsoil. The further landward of the levee and berm the erosional feature stretched, the thicker the topsoil became.

Site 23S0507

Site 23S0507 was discovered while crossing the plowed field to the proposed project. A stone flake and lead bullet was found in the bottom of a dry portion of the eroded bulley (approximately 0.8 meters below the surface). A visual check of the plowed surface revealed other flakes and debitage. However, no diagnostic artifacts nor ceramic pieces were found. Site size is estimated to be approximately 30 X 50 meters and is approximately 122 meters west of Mingo Ditch. As the site was not in the project right-of-way, a surface collection was not made. A Missouri Site Survey form has been filed with the State of Missouri. The site will be avoided during the scour maintenance operation.

Conclusions

Based on an in-field cultural resources survey and a background records search, no evidence of significant prehistoric, historic, or architectural resources exists within the direct impact zone of the proposed Mingo Ditch maintenance work.

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